



**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**February 19, 2009  
For immediate release**

- 1. DNR-funded conservation practices reduce water pollution in 2008**
- 2. EPC approves funding for five DNR solid waste alternatives program contracts**
- 3. DNR encourages recycling of unwanted televisions**

## **DNR-FUNDED CONSERVATION PRACTICES REDUCE WATER POLLUTION IN 2008**

**MEDIA CONTACT: Steve Hopkins, DNR watershed improvement, (515) 281-6402.**

DES MOINES — About 19,000 tons of soil are staying put on the land and out of Iowa streams and lakes, thanks to conservation practices installed in fiscal year 2008, according to numbers released today by the DNR.

Put that amount of soil in dump trucks, and you'd have a line of trucks almost six miles long. The numbers indicate that conservation practices on agricultural and urban land are effectively reducing pollutants reaching Iowa's water. Local watershed projects work with landowners to install conservation practices in a watershed, which is an area of land that drains into a lake or stream. Common conservation practices include wetlands, ponds, terraces and buffers. These practices reduce the amount of pollutants — generally sediment, nutrients and bacteria — reaching a lake or stream.

Each year, the DNR helps fund a number of local watershed projects that help Iowans improve their water. Of those projects, 42 reported on practices installed during federal fiscal year (FFY) 2008. From Oct. 1, 2007 to Sept. 30, 2008, those conservation practices had the following results:

- Reduced sediment reaching streams and lakes by at least 18,860 tons per year.
- Reduced phosphorus reaching streams and lakes by at least 24,585 pounds per year.

- Reduced nitrogen reaching streams and lakes by at least 27,992 pounds per year.

One successful local watershed effort is at Rathbun Lake in southern Iowa, where conservation practices are keeping 5,463 tons of sediment, 7,102 pounds of phosphorus and 6,348 pounds of nitrogen out of the lake per year.

These conservation practices will continue to reduce pollutants at the same rate if properly maintained. The numbers apply only to practices installed in 2008 through DNR-funded watershed projects and do not reflect the total effects of all conservation practices in the state.

“Iowans are taking ownership of their streams, lakes and rivers, and these numbers show they’re making great strides in improving them,” said Steve Hopkins, with the DNR’s watershed improvement program. “These numbers only represent a small number of projects in one year. We’re excited to continue working with Iowans to further their watershed improvement efforts.”

The DNR, in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship – Division of Soil Conservation and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, is currently accepting applications for grant funding for new watershed efforts. More information is available at [www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/](http://www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/). The Section 319 program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides DNR funding for nonpoint pollution programs.

The DNR has tracked annual sediment and phosphorus load reductions since 2004. Practices installed through DNR watershed projects since 2004 now collectively reduce sediment reaching Iowa’s waters by 95,723 tons per year and phosphorus loading by 156,485 pounds per year.

Sediment can make water cloudy, damage the habitat of fish and other aquatic life, and fill in lakes and streambeds. High levels of nutrients, like phosphorus, can cloud the water, increase drinking water costs and lead to poor aquatic life diversity.

*Writer: Jessie Brown*

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## **EPC APPROVES FUNDING FOR FIVE DNR SOLID WASTE ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM CONTRACTS**

**MEDIA CONTACT: Tom Anderson at (515) 281-8623 or [Tom.Anderson@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Tom.Anderson@dnr.iowa.gov)**

DES MOINES – The Iowa Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) approved five Solid Waste Alternatives Program (SWAP) contracts for funding on Feb. 17.

The selected projects will receive a total of \$78,408 in forgivable loans.

Commissioners approved funding for the following solid waste projects to expand or create residential and/or commercial recycling collection, totaling \$91,156:

- **Christian Relief of Supplies and Services**, \$25,200 to expand their existing reuse and recycling program to include all textiles. Textiles not suitable for resale will be baled and sold to a secondary manufacturing market;
- **Maharishi University of Management**, \$12,413 to expand their on-campus recycling program by increasing the number of recycling stations across campus;
- **City of Le Mars**, \$20,000 to complete the City's single stream curbside recycling program to all single-family households;
- **West Branch Community Schools**, \$795 to expand their current recycling program by placing collection containers for plastic beverage bottles at sporting events and other extra curricular school events; and
- **Iowa Recycling Association**, \$20,000 to develop a Best Practices Manual for implementing sustainable meetings, workshops and conferences. The manual will assist meeting planners, service providers, and venues interested in applying environmentally friendly concepts as a way to properly manage typical waste streams generated at such events like paper, cardboard, plastic, metal and food.

The DNR received a total of 18 proposals for consideration during the January 2009 round of funding, requesting \$1.3 million in financial assistance. There are three remaining application deadlines for 2009: April 1, July 1 and Oct. 1.

Application and guidelines are available on the DNR Web site at [www.iowadnr.gov/waste/financialswap.html](http://www.iowadnr.gov/waste/financialswap.html).

SWAP works to reduce the amount of solid waste generated and landfilled in Iowa by providing financial assistance to businesses, government agencies, public and private groups and individuals for a variety of projects to create jobs, increase revenue and preserve Iowa's air, water and land resources.

For more information about SWAP and other DNR waste management programs, go to the DNR Web site at [www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov).

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## **DNR ENCOURAGES RECYCLING OF UNWANTED TELEVISIONS**

**MEDIA CONTACT: Tom Anderson, DNR**, at (515) 281-8623

DES MOINES — While the transition to digital television has been delayed until June 12, many stations have made the switch to all-digital programming, leaving Iowans wondering what to do with their unwanted analog televisions.

The DNR is encouraging Iowans to recycle televisions at one of the more than 100 locations statewide.

“We know that many consumers will decide to upgrade their TVs and get rid of their old sets,” said Susan Johnson, environmental specialist with the DNR. “By choosing to recycle their TV instead of putting it on the curb where it will end up in a landfill, Iowans can be proactive in keeping hazardous materials out of the environment.”

Televisions contain toxic heavy metals, including up to ten pounds of lead each. If disposed of in a landfill, these materials can contaminate land and water resources, posing a potential threat to human health and the environment.

To locate a nearby facility that accepts televisions for recycling, go to [www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov) and click on the green “TV Recycling” button.

Recycling fees, if any, vary by facility. Call ahead for hours and cost information.